

SERVICE STANDARDS FOR NUTRITION SUPPORT: HOME-DELIVERED MEALS AND FOOD BANK/PANTRY SERVICES



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION ON HIV



Approved by Commission on HIV on 08/10/23

SERVICE STANDARDS FOR NUTRITION SUPPORT: HOME-DELIVERED MEALS AND FOOD BANK/PANTRY SERVICES

IMPORTANT: The service standards for Nutrition Support: Home-delivered Meals and Food bank/pantry Services adhere to requirements and restrictions from the federal agency, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The key documents used in developing standards are as follows:

[Human Resource Services Administration \(HRSA\) HIV/AIDS Bureau \(HAB\) Policy Clarification Notice \(PCN\) # 16-02 \(Revised 10/22/18\): Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Services: Eligible Individuals & Allowable Uses of Funds](#)

[HRSA HAB, Division of Metropolitan HIV/AIDS Programs: National Monitoring Standards for Ryan White Part A Grantees: Program – Part A](#)

[Service Standards: Ryan White HIV/AIDS Programs](#)

INTRODUCTION

Service standards for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Part A Program (RWHAP) outline the elements and expectations a service provider should follow when implementing a specific service category. The standards are written for providers for guidance on what services may be offered when developing their Ryan White Part A programs. The standards set the minimum level of care Ryan White-funded agencies offer to clients, however, providers are encouraged to exceed these standards.

The Los Angeles County Commission on HIV (COH) developed Nutrition Support: Home-delivered meals and Food bank/pantry Services service standards (Nutrition Support) to establish the minimum services necessary to provide Nutrition Support services to people living with HIV. The development of the standards includes guidance from service providers, people living with HIV, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Division of HIV and STD Programs (DHSP), members of the Los Angeles County COH Standards and Best Practices Committee (SBP), caucuses, and the public-at-large.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Nutrition Support services for people living with HIV attempt to improve and sustain a client's health, nutrition and food security and quality of life. Good nutrition has been shown to be a critical component of overall measures of health, especially among people living with HIV. Nutrition Support services include Home-delivered meals and Food banks/pantry services.

Recurring themes in this standard include:

- Adequate nutrition is vital to good health in people living with HIV.
- Nutrition Support services should be coordinated with client's primary medical care providers and case managers.
- Assessment and evaluation of nutrition need is an essential part of Nutrition Support services.
- Registered Dietitians (RDs) should be used in Nutrition Support services.
- Food and water safety regulations must be strictly enforced.
- Staff and volunteers need adequate training in food handling and safety.
- Continuous quality improvement efforts are vital.

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All Nutrition Support services will be provided in accordance with current [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)¹, Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Los Angeles County guidelines and procedures, as well as with federal, State, and local laws and regulations. All programs will comply with City, County and/or State grocery and/or restaurant health code regulations. Additionally, programs will follow accepted standards and guidelines set forth by the Association of Nutrition Services Agencies, Dietitians in AIDS Care, and the American Dietetic Association.

All programs providing food distribution services will operate in collaboration with a Registered Dietitian (RD) consistent with California state law. Such RD will have current knowledge of nutrition issues for people living with HIV.

HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Home delivered meals are provided for clients experiencing physical or emotional difficulties related to HIV/AIDS that render them incapable of preparing nutritional meals for themselves. These services are offered to medically indigent (uninsured, underinsured, and/or ineligible for health care coverage) persons with HIV/AIDS and their eligible family² members residing within Los Angeles County. Meals may be delivered in a dwelling place, identified by the client as their home.

FOOD BANK/PANTRY SERVICES

Food bank/pantry services are distribution centers that warehouse food and related grocery items including nutritional supplements and other miscellaneous items. These services are offered primarily medically indigent (uninsured, underinsured, and/or ineligible for health care coverage) persons living with HIV/AIDS and their eligible family members residing within Los Angeles County.

PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

Each agency is responsible for establishing comprehensive job descriptions that outline the duties and responsibilities for each of the positions proposed in their program. All staff must be given and will sign a written job description with specific minimum requirements for their position. Agencies are responsible for providing staff with supervision and training to develop capacities needed for effective job performance.

- **Chefs:** involved in food production and menu design. Must have at least a high school diploma or GED and be professionally trained/certified with a current food protection and handling license/certification in accordance with applicable State, Federal and local laws, and regulations. Chefs must be familiar with the multi-cultural and dietetic needs of the population. Experience in food preparation and cooking for bulk-meal services preferred.

¹ [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025](#)

² Family will be broadly defined to include any individual affected by HIV disease through their relationship and shared household with a person living with HIV. Affected individuals (people not living with HIV) may be eligible for HRSA Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program services in limited situations, but these services for affected individuals must always benefit People Living with HIV. See [HRSA PCN-16-02](#)

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- **Dietitians/Nutritionists:** involved in meal planning and menu design. Must be registered and licensed, as required by State and Los Angeles County. A Registered Dietitian³ (RD) is an expert in food or nutrition who has completed the following:
 - A Bachelor’s, master’s, or doctorate degree in nutrition and related sciences; and
 - A supervised dietetic internship or equivalent; and
 - A national exam which credentials them as an RD by the Commission on Dietetic Registration⁴.
 Continuing education is required to maintain a registered dietitian certification⁵.
- **Food Service Workers⁶:** Any food service employee having direct contact in daily food preparation will hold a current food protection and handling license/certification. A Certified Food Handler⁷ (CFH) has basic knowledge in food/water safety and sanitation, have passed a food handling exam⁸, and maintain a current certificate⁹ in food safety in Los Angeles County.
- **Food Delivery Drivers:** must have a valid driver’s license, familiarity with the geographic region being served and possess good interpersonal communication and writing skills.

SERVICE STANDARDS—NUTRITION SUPPORT

All contractors must meet the Universal Standards of Care approved by the COH in addition to the following Nutrition Support Services standards. The Universal Standards of Care can be accessed at: <https://hiv.lacounty.gov/service-standards>

SERVICE COMPONENT	STANDARD	MEASURE
CLIENT INTAKE	<p>Nutrition Support programs will conduct a client intake performed by an RD, Degreed Nutritionist, or nutrition student under supervision of an RD.</p> <p>Initial nutrition intake and annual screening¹⁰ may be conducted onsite, in-person, telephonically or videoconferencing set forth by the nutrition support provider agency and agreed to by both parties.</p>	<p>Client intake in client file updated annually. Nutrition screen signed and dated by nutrition professional on file in client’s chart.</p> <p>Initial and additional intake screenings will include, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical considerations • Food allergies/intolerances • Interactions between medicines, foods, and complimentary therapies

³ [Commission on Dietetic Registration \(cdrnet.org\)](http://cdrnet.org)

⁴ [2019 RD Handbook \(cdrnet.org\)](http://cdrnet.org)

⁵ [Commission on Dietetic Registration \(cdrnet.org\)](http://cdrnet.org)

⁶ [Certified Food Handler & Manager | Los Angeles County Department of Public Health - Environmental Health \(lacounty.gov\)](http://lacounty.gov)

⁷ [Food Safety Training \(ca.gov\)](http://ca.gov)

⁸ [California Food Handler Card - California Restaurant Association \(calrest.org\)](http://calrest.org)

⁹ [All Directory Listing \(ansi.org\)](http://ansi.org)

¹⁰ [HCC-AND-HIV-Nutri-Gdln-Recs-2010-with-Algorithm.pdf \(aplahealth.org\)](http://aplahealth.org)

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SERVICE COMPONENT	STANDARD	MEASURE
	Nutrition screenings will be shared with the client’s primary medical provider when possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dietary restrictions including special diets and cultural and religious considerations • Assessment of nutrition intake vs. estimated need • Client’s nutritional concerns • Ability to complete Activities of Daily Living • Any HIV-related illnesses diagnose in the last six months • Any chronic illness with date of diagnosis • Family members and caregivers and if they need Home-Delivered Meals service as well¹¹ • Current nutrition issues such as: lack of appetite, nausea/vomiting, involuntary weight loss, diarrhea, inability to prepare or procure food due to health issues, etc. • Medications and/or treatments/therapies
	Client confidentiality will be strictly maintained. As necessary, Release of Information will be signed to exchange information with other providers.	Signed, dated Release of Information in client chart.
	Nutrition Support programs will coordinate with client’s primary care providers and case managers to assess need for service and to ensure nutrition needs are being addressed.	Records of communication with medical providers and case managers in client chart.
	Nutrition education will be provided by an RD or Dietetic Technician, Registered ¹² (DTR) or nutrition student	Documentation of education and referral on file in client chart.

¹¹ Affected individuals (people not living with HIV) may be eligible for HRSA Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program services in limited situations, but these services for affected individuals must always benefit People Living with HIV. See [HRSA PCN-16-02](#)

¹² [Commission on Dietetic Registration \(cdrnet.org\)](http://www.cdrnet.org)

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SERVICE COMPONENT	STANDARD	MEASURE
	under the supervision of RD to appropriate clients identified through screening process. When needed, clients will be referred for medical nutrition therapy.	
MEAL PRODUCTION AND DELIVERY	Home-Delivered Meals programs providing home delivered meals will develop menus with the help of RD(s).	Menu cycle on file at provider agency that considers the nutrition needs of the client, special diet restrictions, portion control and client, community, and cultural preference. Menu cycle will be changed as necessary.
	Home-Delivered Meals programs providing home delivered meals will prepare and ensure the delivery of meals to clients. Meals will be planned by a chef under the supervision of an RD. Food and water safety measures will be strictly enforced.	Plans on file at provider agency.
	Home-Delivered Meals programs providing home delivered meals will distribute meals to Community-Based Organizations (CBO)s for delivery to clients.	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)s with CBOs on file at provider agency.
	Home-Delivered Meals programs will deliver meals directly to clients within an expected delivery time if CBOs are not able to distribute meals.	Delivery policy on file at provider agency. Daily delivery records on file at provider agency
	Home-Delivered Meals programs will train volunteers in proper food handling techniques and HIV sensitivity.	Volunteer training curriculum and records of volunteer trainings on file at provider agency.
PROGRAM OPERATIONS	Food Bank/Pantry programs providing food bank/pantry services will develop menus and food choices with the help of RD(s). ^{13,14,15,16}	Menu cycle on file at provider agency that considers the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition needs of the client • Special diet restrictions • Portion control • Client, community

¹³ [Eating Tips: A Nutrition Guide for People Living with HIV/AIDS \(ny.gov\)](https://www.ny.gov/eating-tips-a-nutrition-guide-for-people-living-with-hiv-aids)

¹⁴ [Healthy eating for people living with HIV | aidsmap](https://aidsmap.org/healthy-eating-for-people-living-with-hiv/)

¹⁵ [Nutrition and HIV | The Well Project](https://www.thewellproject.org/nutrition-and-hiv/)

¹⁶ [HIV and Nutrition - POZ](https://www.poz.org/hiv-and-nutrition/)

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SERVICE COMPONENT	STANDARD	MEASURE
	<p>Grocery store gift cards may be used to supplement the nutritional/dietary needs of the client if available food choices are limited. Nutritional supplements such as Ensure may only be used in addition to food and not as the only offering to the client. Clients must also be made aware of non-allowable purchases using grocery store gift cards such as alcohol and/or tobacco products. Grocery store gift cards may not be redeemed for cash. Grocery store gift cards should be bought only in amounts that are reasonable for use in the contract year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural preference <p>Grocery store gift card inventory log on file.</p>
	<p>Food Bank/Pantry programs providing food bank/pantry services will purchase and maintain a nutritional food supply. Food/ water safety and handling measures will be strictly enforced.</p>	<p>Plans on file at provider agency.</p>
	<p>Food Bank/Pantry programs will distribute food to provider agencies for delivery to clients.</p>	<p>MOUs with CBOs on file at provider agency.</p>
	<p>Food Bank/Pantry programs will distribute food directly to clients.</p>	<p>Distribution policy and daily distribution records on file at provider agency.</p>
	<p>Food Bank/Pantry programs will train volunteers in proper food handling techniques and HIV sensitivity.</p>	<p>Volunteer training curriculum and records of volunteer trainings on file at provider agency.</p>
PROMOTION AND LINKAGES	<p>Nutrition Support programs will promote the availability of their services.</p>	<p>Promotion plan on file at provider agency</p>
	<p>Nutrition Support programs will network with CBOs to identify appropriate clients.</p>	<p>Record of outreach and networking efforts on file at provider agency</p>
	<p>Home-Delivered Meals programs providing Home-delivered Meals will develop MOUs with provider agencies that provide food delivery services.</p>	<p>MOUs on file at provider agency that include:</p>

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SERVICE COMPONENT	STANDARD	MEASURE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Days and times food will be delivered and distributed to clients • Persons responsible for ensuring that food is delivered appropriately • Persons responsible for the actual delivery of food (e.g., staff, volunteers) • Geographic areas to be served
	<p>Food Bank/Pantry programs providing food bank/pantry services will develop MOUs with CBOs that collaborate on food distribution.</p>	<p>MOUs on file at provider.</p>
PROGRAM RECORDS	<p>Nutrition Support programs will maintain client files.</p>	<p>Client chart on file at provider agency that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client intake • Review and evaluation of updated determination of nutrition need and plan to meet nutrition needs • Client services agreement • Documentation of referrals • Documentation of annual reassessment of eligibility • Initial nutrition intake and annual screening All entries in client chart will be signed and dated.
FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY	<p>Nutrition support programs will follow Los Angeles County Environmental Health Food Safety Guidelines¹⁷</p>	<p>Documentation on file.</p>
	<p>Nutrition Support programs will be responsible to develop an Infection Control Program.</p>	<p>Infection Control Program on file at provider agency that includes education, promotion and inspection of proper hand washing, personal hygiene and safe food handling practices by staff and volunteers.</p>

¹⁷ [Environmental Health | Los Angeles County Department of Public Health \(lapublichealth.org\)](http://www.lapublichealth.org/eh/)
(<http://www.lapublichealth.org/eh/>)

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SERVICE COMPONENT	STANDARD	MEASURE
	Nutrition Support programs will be responsible for developing a Food Quality Control Program ¹⁸ .	Food Quality Control Program on file at provider agency that includes these requirements (at minimum): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper food temperature is maintained at all times • Food inventory is updated and rotated as appropriate on a first-in, first-out basis • Facilities and equipment have capacity for proper food storage and handling • A procedure for discarding unsafe food is posted • Providers and vendors maintain proper licenses • Programs will maintain quality control logs
	Nutrition Support programs will develop a nutrition support manual.	Food Service Manual on file at provider agency which addresses food service and preparation standards; sanitation; safety; food storage; distribution; and volunteer training.
	Nutrition Support programs will conduct an annual client survey.	Client survey results on file at provider agency and agency plan of action to address concerns.
TRIAGE AND REFERRAL	Clients applying for nutrition support services who do not have a case manager will be referred to a case manager.	Record of referral on file in client chart.
	Clients will be referred to other medical and support services as needed.	Referrals to treatment advocacy, peer support, medical treatment, dental treatment, etc., recorded in client chart.
	Referrals will be made to other food sources as needed.	Record of referral on file in client chart.
CASE CLOSURE	Nutrition Support programs will develop case closure criteria and procedures.	Program cases may be closed when the client: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocates out of the service area

¹⁸ [Food Safety Tools For Success \(lacounty.gov\)](http://lacounty.gov)

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SERVICE COMPONENT	STANDARD	MEASURE
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has had no direct program contact in the past six months • Is ineligible for the service • No longer needs the service • Discontinues the service • Is incarcerated long term • Uses the service improperly or has not complied with the client services agreement • Has died
	Patients will be formally notified of pending case closure.	Contact attempts and notification about case closure on file in client record.
STAFFING REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS	At minimum, all nutrition support staff will be able to provide age and culturally appropriate care to clients living with HIV or affected by HIV. ^{19,20}	Staff resume and qualifications on file at provider agency.
	All employees involved in the preparation of meals will undergo a health screening as a condition of employment.	Copy of health clearance in employee file.
	All staff and volunteers will be given orientation prior to providing services.	Orientation curriculum on file at provider agency which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic HIV/AIDS education • Client confidentiality and HIPAA regulations • Basic overview of food and water safety²¹ • Food protection protocols • Service provider personal hygiene • Work safety • Proper receiving and storing of food and supplies

¹⁹ [HIV and Nutrition and Food Safety | NIH](#)

²⁰ [AIDS/HIV | Nutrition.gov](#)

²¹ [Food Safety For Older Adults and People With Cancer, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS, Organ Transplants, and Auto-Immune Diseases \(fda.gov\)](#)

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SERVICE COMPONENT	STANDARD	MEASURE
	In-service trainings will be provided quarterly by an RD or other qualified professional.	Record of quarterly training (including date, time, topic, presenter, and attendees) on file at provider agency.
	Any nutrition support employee having direct contact with daily food preparation will hold a current certification in food handling.	Certifications on file at provider agency.
	Volunteers will be supervised by a staff person. All staff will be reviewed by their supervisor annually, at minimum.	Supervision plan and annual staff reviews on file at provider agency.
	RDs working with HIV food distribution programs will have the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad knowledge of principles and practices of nutrition and dietetics • Advanced knowledge in the nutrition assessment, counseling, evaluation, and care plans of people living with HIV • Advanced knowledge of current scientific information regarding nutrition assessment and therapy 	Resume and training verification on file at provider agency.